
Module 7: Strategy Live – Outline

Purpose

- To better understand the challenges and proven methods for formulating and executing strategy.

Objectives

- To discover new tools, techniques and processes for facilitating more effective strategic thinking and planning;
- To deepen knowledge of the leadership and managerial actions required in developing and linking a high level strategy to day-to-day operations (strategy execution);
- To sharpen awareness of the assumptions, values, beliefs and engagement requirements of the many partners or players in a strategic thinking and implementation initiative.

Readings

1. Camillus, J. (May 2008). *Strategy as a wicked problem*. **Harvard Business Review**. [pdf](#)
2. de Souza Briggs, X. (June 2003). *Strategy Tool # 4: Organizing stakeholders, building movement, setting the agenda*. www.community-problem-solving.net
3. DiStefano, J. & Maznevski, M. (November 2003). *Culture in International Management: mapping the impact*. **IMD Perspectives for Managers**. [pdf](#)
4. Finley, D. et al. (Summer 2006). *Phoenix in Calgary: how the Calgary Philharmonic survived bankruptcy and flourished*. **The Nonprofit Quarterly**. <http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/section/813.html>
5. Mankins, M. & Steele, R. (July-August 2005) *Turning great strategy into great performance*. **Harvard Business Review**. [pdf](#)
6. Mintzberg, H. (2005). *Developing leaders? Developing countries? Learning from another place*. <http://www.mintzberg.org/pdf/devleaders.pdf>
7. **Knowledge@Wharton**. (October 17, 2007). 'The art of woo': selling your ideas to the entire organization, one person at a time. <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article.cfm?articleid=1823>
8. Ready, D. & Conger, J. (Winter 2008). *Enabling bold visions*. **MIT Sloan Management Review**. [pdf](#)

Advance Preparation

- **Learning Journal:** Complete online learning journal (last submission)
- **Music:** Team 1 — Emerging 1ders
- **Reflections on Readings:** Team 5 — ACME Inc.
- **Fit Break:** Team 2 — The Trans4mers
- **Special Activity:** Team 3 — The Bare Necessities
- **PowerTalking:** Review all sections of the Quick Reference chart. Note your power talking strengths and areas for improvement. Choose one of the nine power talking categories on which to focus. Over the summer, deliberately practice your “power talk” using one or more of the phrases suggested. Note your observations: for example, how did it feel? What changed, if anything, in your interactions with others?
- **Team Project Update:** Each team prepare a two-page synopsis of project milestones completed, a 30-day critical path and current questions and concerns. Note that project reports and drafts of presentations are due by October 24 to mentors (copy of each project team’s report to all members of CMT). We strongly recommend that before November 7 each team undertake a dress rehearsal with mentors and any other peers from which the team would value feedback.

Key Concepts

- Mission relates to an organization’s fundamental purpose—**why** it exists. Vision describes not only a stretch goal—**what** an organization intends to accomplish at a point in time in the future—but also a few key interlinked outcomes (often called “strategic goals” or a “strategy map”). The latter together drive the organization towards its stretch goal.
- Visioning and strategy-making are an ongoing dynamic of formulation and testing and re-formulation as people learn the lessons of implementing what they thought were good strategies and tactics.
- Ownership of an organization’s direction best occurs when the people who must implement are engaged in its development.
- The ability to create and sustain value is the ultimate goal of strategy.
- Strategy shapes the selection of measures. Selecting the right measures (not just financial) and linking them to individual and corporate performance influences what gets done.
- There is a discipline to successful execution: rigorously challenging assumptions, developing a range of well-substantiated options, tenaciously following through and ensuring accountability and alignment throughout the organization.

- Community problem-solving and sustainability are driven by local connectedness, assets (not needs) and shared decision-making.
- Strategic change in support of organizational performance and community well-being does not sell itself. Leader-managers must create a constituency for change.
- Understanding and working with the mindsets and interests of stakeholders is an essential capability in determining what to change and how. The art of “woo” (winning others over without coercion, using relationships-based emotionally intelligent persuasion) is a central part of the process.
- Many strategy issues aren’t just tough or persistent---they’re “wicked”: have innumerable causes, are hard to describe and don’t have a right answer. The best techniques for managing “wicked” problems are the simplest: (1) Involve stakeholders, document opinions, and communicate; (2) Outline the corporate identity (values, competencies, aspirations); (3) Focus on action (experiment with a number of strategies); (4) Adopt a “feed-forward” orientation (envisioning the future—imagining novel solutions to fit anticipated internal and external circumstances).
- The gap between inspiration and implementation is a common one. Five critical activities help avoid failed bold visions: (1) Frame the agenda (challenges as compelling stories); (2) Engage the organization (distribute ownership of the vision broadly); (3) Build mission-critical capabilities (collaborate); (4) Connect the dots by creating alignment (mind-sets, systems, processes); (5) Energize the organization through the power of people (a free and flowing pipeline of talent).