

STRATEGIC PLANNING

PREAMBLE: This short précis was from a research of several books written on the subject and compiled to a brief summary .

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STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic Planning is the process by which the members of an organisation envision the organisation's future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future. It is an ongoing process.

To develop our strategic plan we first must understand and accept the following:

1. What function does the organisation serve?
2. How does the organisation serve this function?
3. How does the organisation go about filling this function?

NINE KEYS SHAPE THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

1. Values
2. Mission
3. Empowerment
4. Proactive Futuring
5. Perseverance
6. Innovation
7. Flexibility
8. Monitoring
9. Focus

1. VALUES are set by an exercise in self - examination. It is deemed necessary in order to understand the basis for operation and existence. These will stem from the underlying set of ethics, philosophy and principles.

2. MISSION, once stated allows the members of an organisation to understand why they are part of the organisation. It will display widespread commitment and loyalty by creating a template for operating. A mission statement will present in simple terms the dominant thrust of the organisation. It is a brief clear statement of the objectives, it provides the context for strategies, it sets the arena in which the organisation will operate in, it determines resource allocation and it guides the general pattern, growth and direction the organisation will follow. The mission statement shall identify and prioritise driving forces and distinctive competences. It will set what function the organisation will perform, for whom or what does it perform this function and how the organisation goes about performing its function.

3. EMPOWERMENT is the tool by which the members of an organisation feel they are in charge of their destiny. It is a positive frame, which allows people to be in control. It will provide incentive and proactive development. The principles of inclusiveness and consultation are inherent in this process.

4. PROACTIVE FUTURING is the act of deciding what you would like to happen and setting out to create it. The best way to predict the future is to invent it. It is empowerment at its broadest level. By the development of lateral vision and creativity exercises an organisation will extend to becoming visionary.

5. PERSEVERANCE. Change can be made at the knowledge level, at the attitude level, at the behaviour level and at the group level. The important variables are, one the difficulty in making the change and two, the time it takes to implement the change. It is perseverance that separates an idea from making it become reality. With the functions of an organisation set, a guide is created for the perseverance for the creation of the goals desired to achieve.

6. INNOVATION is critical to shaping strategic success. There is a difference between creativity and innovation. Creativity relates to the generation of ideas, the creating of options, the identification of possibilities. Innovation refers to actual organisational change, improvement or renewal, fine tuning that comes as a result of innovation. Many organisations frequently function with long periods of tradition due to a cultural maternal habit for stability. But this habit

can develop into paralysis. Many organisations have developed systems that are relatively impervious to change. By understanding and accepting the phenomenon of evolution we see that no order is static and change is a natural consequence. This change is positively generated through innovation.

7. FLEXIBILITY is crucial in the dynamic world we are part of. It is important to then develop strategies that allow significant readjustment for all the variables that do exist with all the issues on the table or in the closet. This principle operates at all levels including interpersonal understanding and acceptance.

8. MONITORING is the constant tracking of the strategy as it develops. It is then necessary to assess and readjust the directions as required in order to maintain the desired motives. This is a feedback process that includes loops of reassessment and redirection for gross measures alone are inadequate for managing and shaping strategic success. IMPLEMENTATION of a strategic plan is the critical variable that will ultimately determine whether or not that plan will succeed. Managing the plan is facilitated by high quality information sources, carefully monitored.

9. FOCUS on the mission will develop an efficient process. It will limit all the unnecessary peripheral encumbrances that constantly interact with any strategy, including interpersonal issues that are constant blockages. Maintaining a focus will determine the success of any organisation.

SUMMARY: Decisions should be based on values; the mission will be made crystal clear to everyone in the organisation; involvement must be exciting and inclusive. The members must be empowered and encouraged to be innovative and persevere. They must carry forward ideas tenaciously and successfully overcome hurdles with creativity. Strategies must be carefully implemented, with feedback mechanisms well established and tracked. Day-to-day, week-to-week and month-to-month, the strategic directions must be managed with the ongoing strategies in mind. Maintaining the focus will determine the success of the organisation.

The development of any organisation requires the setting and fulfillment of the following

ELEMENTS

1. Ethic or charter
2. Mission statement
3. Philosophy
4. Principles
5. Policy

6. Strategy

7. Implementation

1. ETHIC or charter is the core and underlying spirit and moral essential quality that develops the reason for the drive or motivation behind any activity.
2. MISSION STATEMENT is a written statement of reason, objective and commitment that stems from an ethic. It binds and consecrates members of an organisation by also being a statement of focus.
3. PHILOSOPHY is the basis of knowledge and the extension of wisdom to develop principles and policy that may stem from the ethic.
4. PRINCIPLES are the fundamental tenets or rules, that guide and form the groundwork for the development of all actions, conduct and policies that follow.
5. POLICY is the methodology of how the ideals, principles, philosophy, and ethic will be pursued.
6. STRATEGY To achieve the aims and reach the objectives of the mission statement a strategic process is set with directions presented to achieve certain objectives for set periods. The how to of any activity.
7. IMPLEMENTATION is the structure of how the strategy will unfold. The process and management will integrate with all the aforementioned elements.