

Planning with Strategic Perspective

This is a generic outline. It is normally adapted to meet the specific requirements of each organisation.

Overview

- to create strategic perspective so that managers are aware of changes in the commercial environment and how they may impact the organisation
- to give managers greater strategic awareness so that they understand how their actions contribute to the company gaining sustainable competitive advantage
- to help managers to explore the current and future commercial environment and recognise the challenges and issues that face the company
- to provide a range of practical tools and techniques for analyzing, creating and planning
- to identify the key performance drivers and gain an appreciation of the importance of intangible assets – brand, relationships, skills, knowledge etc
- to develop frameworks for measuring and managing key performance drivers and intangibles
- to place all the above in the context of managing for growth and value

Action Mapping

What distinguishes our approach from many others is an approach called action mapping, a synthesis of a number of methods, including visual thinking, systems thinking and strategy canvases. While models such as the Ansoff matrix, Porter's Five Forces and Value Chain Analysis are all valuable in helping one to ask the right questions; they don't provide the answer. Your competitive position is unique. and there is no formula that can guarantee success. As Peter Drucker said:

“[there's no] substitute for thinking.”

Action maps provide:

- an holistic, big picture perspective of a business that can be used at any level – organisation, department, team, individual – with each perspective being consistent with the others
- a link between the strategic and everyday individual actions
- a clear indication of the critical success factors – including intangibles – relationships, skills, culture, attitudes (hard to measure but usually the primary drivers)
- insight into relationships between performance drivers (reducing 'silo' thinking)

- a list of assumptions, obstacles, resources required, responsibilities etc
- a simple way to represent and present ideas and plans
- a framework for discussion
- a focus on action
- a powerful way to communicate strategy and highlight key elements

Topics Outline

Introduction

- what do we mean by strategy
- analysis and intuition
- a complex process to produce simple guidelines

Strategic Perspective

- strategic foresight (vision)
- macro-environment – trends – opportunities and threats – scenario analysis – creating “future memory” and preparedness
- Porter - industry analysis – barriers to exit and entry, substitutes, potential entrants, competitors
- value chain – understanding where value is added
- resource appraisal – in particular, core competencies – usually based on a unique combination of skills, assets, knowledge, culture and experience, core competencies are the gateways to sustainable competitive advantage
- market analysis and the art-science of segmentation – identifying attractive markets
- creating “causal maps” to identify performance drivers

Competitive Choice

- the iterative nature of planning
- who – which markets – segmentation / positioning
- what – what services and products
- using matrices to gain insight – GE / Ansoff etc
- how firms gain sustainable competitive advantage
 - cost
 - differentiation – product / service / image / expertise etc
 - focus
- core competencies
- strategic staircase – from here to there – to reach our five-year strategic objective, where do we have to be in 4, 3, 1 year(s) ... next month ... tomorrow?
- shareholder value / customer equity
- identifying performance drivers – the importance of intangibles

Implementation

- marketing – the 7Ps
- achieving customer focus / Customer Lifetime Value
- intangibles – investment and leverage – relationships, skills, knowledge, brand
- measurement and control – ROI, scorecards, qualitative
- strategy and culture
- communicating strategy
- leading change – Kotter, Bridges etc

Approach

Participatory and involving with an emphasis on the practical application of skills and knowledge. Workshops, combining group discussion, case studies, video, what-if scenarios, the application of models and tools and presentations, can be supported with online learning and coaching to ensure the transfer of insights and skills to the workplace.

More information: commercial-awareness.com