

INTRODUCTION

A Google search for “Strategic Planning” will yield more than 30 million entries. Obviously, there are a lot of views about how to create a strategic plan. What this means is that there are different types of strategic planning to apply to different situations.

Many years ago, I was very fortunate to have been in an organization with a more senior leader who really understood how to do strategic planning and he taught me the necessity of a well crafted plan. That experience set me on a course that has resulted in the strategic planning model in this book. Before those of you who hate Total Quality Management get concerned, let me assure this is not a text on TQM. In fact, the model I’ve developed is quite different from what I first learned.

This model is the result of over 20 years of study and application and it has been used successfully in numerous situations. It is specifically designed to help an organization’s leader or leadership team create a basic plan to lead the organization to excel in its business niche.

The planning model provides a basic framework to provide your leadership team with a roadmap and ensure they, and all members of your organization, understand what is important. This book will guide you to complete a plan with all the elements of the model and will prepare you to present that plan to your subordinates and the organization as a whole.

Planning is a leadership responsibility. There are some management theories that indicate planning should be a team effort with all levels of the organization participating.

While such participatory management has definite advantages in mapping out the best course of action to accomplish goals and objectives, the basic plan remains a leadership responsibility. Senior

leaders generally have more experience and knowledge of the organization's overall operation. They may also have a much greater interest, sometimes financial, in success. This is not to say leaders are any smarter than their subordinates and leaders must never come to believe they are. To do so is a sure road to failure. There are various methods of accomplishing the planning process. This model is effective no matter what technique is used to create the plan. In medium businesses the use of a trained external facilitator may be beneficial. I have used this planning model in many different organizations and in each case, I found it necessary to use a different technique .

In one case, the organization already had a strategic plan, but it had not been closely followed. The organization's leader wanted to re-energize his subordinate leadership and set new goals. In that case, we went through the process very much like it is laid out in this book. An already outstanding organization became more organized and able to take on some new challenges.

Five years ago I was a senior executive in a large Engineering company and also a part time business mentor for small business owners. The large company was preparing a Tender document for a long term contract which required as part of the submission a very comprehensive Strategic Plan, supported by detailed plans for each part of the business. The whole process took months, involved a lot of people, and involved huge cost.

The thought of the effort involved and the complexity of such a plan would make most small or medium business owners despair.

DON'T DESPAIR!

When you have completed the simple process in this book you will have a one page blueprint for the future success of your small or medium business. It takes a little effort initially but the result will amaze you,

and you will be surprised how much information you already have either in your business OR in your head!

I am a great believer in the “**KISS**” principle, or **Keep **It Simple Stupid**, so will reduce the work you need to do to some very simple steps.**